

All veterans deserve the best care that our country can give, but there are gaps in services for Native American veterans.

The advisory committee established by this bill will ensure that we look at and remedy the specific barriers Native American veterans face so they will have access to the same care that other veterans have.

For these reasons and many more, I am thankful for the inclusion of my bill today and look forward to seeing its implementation by President-elect Biden.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) has expired.

Mr. DAVID P. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I am prepared to close.

Mr. Speaker, it is obvious today, with the minority leader, the Speaker, and numerous, numerous distinguished Members coming to speak, the importance of this.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman TAKANO for his work on this. I thank all the Members who, in a bipartisan way, brought this extremely important bill to fruition.

I certainly appreciate the honor of having this bill named after Senator ISAKSON and myself, and I encourage my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 7105, the Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act, includes my bill helping get more funding for operations and maintenance to locally-run, veterans cemeteries nationwide.

My legislation, H.R. 5487, increases the amount the VA can grant for this purpose each year from \$5 million to \$10 million. As more veterans choose to be buried close to their home, more states, territories, and tribal governments are applying for funding from the VA to help cover the costs of operating and maintaining local veterans cemeteries.

And, while the list of applications grows, the amount the Department can award has not. Under current law, no more than \$5 million can be awarded per year to meet the needs of over 100 cemeteries.

H.R. 5487, the Veterans Cemetery Grants Improvement Act updates that authorization by a modest \$5 million. The Act will help veteran cemeteries in every state, territory, and tribal nation, remain the dignified and well-maintained resting places our veterans deserve.

I know in my own district, the Northern Mariana Islands, the veterans cemetery, built with federal funds, faces challenges in this respect. Veterans' families have come to me for help and this bill responds.

I know my co-sponsor, Representative STEIL, shares this concern for the Southern Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery in his district, as do other Members for the cemeteries that serve their constituents.

And I know the members of this House are committed to honoring our nation's veterans and their families, who have sacrificed so much to ensure our country remains safe and free.

I thank Chairman TAKANO and Senator TESTER for all their support to include into H.R. 7105 this important measure.

I ask my colleagues to support H.R. 7105.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 7105.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the Senate amendment was concurred in.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

TRANSPARENCY AND EFFECTIVE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES FOR VETERAN CAREGIVERS ACT

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 2216) to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to formally recognize caregivers of veterans, notify veterans and caregivers of clinical determinations relating to eligibility for the family caregiver program, and temporarily extend benefits for veterans who are determined ineligible for the family caregiver program, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 2216

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Transparency and Effective Accountability Measures for Veteran Caregivers Act" or the "TEAM Veteran Caregivers Act".

SEC. 2. MODIFICATION OF ADMINISTRATION OF CAREGIVER PROGRAMS OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) FORMAL RECOGNITION OF CAREGIVERS.—

(1) REPORT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report regarding the feasibility and advisability of formally recognizing all caregivers of veterans by identifying any caregiver of a veteran in the electronic health record of the veteran.

(B) CAREGIVERS RECOGNIZED.—The recognition of caregivers described in subparagraph (A) shall include recognition of—

(i) any family caregiver who is approved as a provider of personal care services for an eligible veteran under the program of comprehensive assistance for family caregivers under subsection (a) of section 1720G of title 38, United States Code; and

(ii) any caregiver of a covered veteran participating in the program of general caregiver support services under subsection (b) of such section.

(C) TIMELINE.—If the Secretary determines that formally recognizing all caregivers of veterans as described in subparagraph (A) is feasible and advisable, the report required by such subparagraph shall include a timeline for implementing such recognition.

(2) IMPLEMENTATION.—If the Secretary determines that formally recognizing all caregivers of veterans as described in paragraph (1)(A) is feasible and advisable, the Secretary shall implement such recognition in accordance with the timeline included in the report required by such paragraph.

(b) NOTIFICATIONS, EXTENSION OF BENEFITS, AND DISCHARGE FROM FAMILY CAREGIVER

PROGRAM.—Section 1720G(a) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

“(12)(A) The Secretary shall notify the individuals described in subparagraph (C) regarding decisions affecting the furnishing of assistance under this subsection using standardized letters, as the Secretary determines such notifications and letters to be appropriate.

“(B) A notification provided under subparagraph (A) shall include the elements required for notices of decisions under section 5104(b) of this title to the extent that those elements apply to such notification, unless, not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of the Transparency and Effective Accountability Measures for Veteran Caregivers Act, the Secretary determines that it would not be feasible to include such elements in such notifications and submits to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report setting forth the reasons for such determination.

“(C) The individuals described in this subparagraph shall include—

“(i) an individual who submits an application for the program established under paragraph (1);

“(ii) an individual determined by the Secretary to be an eligible veteran pursuant to such an application; and

“(iii) a family caregiver of an eligible veteran who is—

“(I) approved as a provider of personal care services under paragraph (6)(B); or

“(II) designated as a primary provider of personal care services under paragraph (7)(A).

“(13)(A) If the Secretary determines that a veteran receiving services under the program established under paragraph (1) is no longer eligible for such program solely because of improvement in the condition of the veteran—

“(i) the effective date of discharge of the veteran from the program shall be not earlier than the date that is 60 days after the date on which the Secretary provides notice of such lack of eligibility under paragraph (12)(A) to the relevant individuals described in paragraph (12)(C); and

“(ii) the Secretary shall extend benefits under the program established under paragraph (1) for a family caregiver of the veteran described in paragraph (12)(C)(iii), including stipends under paragraph (3)(A)(ii)(V), if such an extension is determined appropriate by the Secretary, for a 90-day period following discharge of the veteran from the program.

“(B) This paragraph shall not be construed to limit the authority of the Secretary—

“(i) to prescribe regulations addressing other bases for—

“(I) the discharge of a veteran from the program established under paragraph (1); or

“(II) the revocation of the designation of a family caregiver of a veteran as a primary provider of personal care services under paragraph (7)(A); or

“(ii) to provide advance notice and extended benefits under the program, as appropriate, if another basis for discharge of a veteran described in subclause (I) of clause (i) or revocation of a designation described in subclause (II) of such clause applies.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) and the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DAVID P. ROE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous material on S. 2216.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 2216, Senator PETERS' bill, the TEAM Veteran Caregivers Act.

This legislation clarifies certain elements of VA's program of comprehensive assistance for family caregivers and the general caregiver program.

The bill formally recognizes a veteran's primary caregiver in the veteran's medical record and requires standardization in letters determining program eligibility.

Additionally, it extends the benefits of the comprehensive program for 90 days after a veteran has been determined to no longer be clinically eligible. This will allow the family caregivers, who have likely forgone or minimized their own careers in order to care for veterans, the means and necessary time to transition back to the workforce without worrying about how to pay the bills. This is an unnecessary stress on those who have already been through so much.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to support S. 2216, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVID P. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 2216, the TEAM Veteran Caregivers Act.

Just as our Nation's veterans are heroes, so are their caregivers. When a servicemember or veteran is seriously injured in service to our country, their family caregiver serves as an irreplaceable source of support and care during recovery and beyond.

They are just as vital a part of the veteran's care team as the veteran's doctors and nurses. They deserve respect, recognition, and support for all the work they do for their veteran loved ones and the personal sacrifices that work requires of them.

Since the Department of Veterans Affairs' family caregiver program was created by Congress in 2012, caregiver support services—including a monthly stipend, respite care, training, and healthcare, if needed—have been offered to eligible caregivers of post-9/11 veterans.

We expanded the family caregiver program to include caregivers of pre-9/11 veterans in the MISSION Act 2 years ago, and those caregivers began receiving benefits through the program in October.

Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if I didn't say the Dole Foundation and Senator Dole had a great influence on this.

Along with expanding the family caregiver program to caregivers of veterans of all eras, VA also made several programmatic changes, which I hope will ensure the program works better for every single veteran and caregiver in need of it. However, it may also result in some caregivers who were formerly eligible for the program to no longer be eligible for it because their veteran loved one had sufficiently recovered as to no longer require the same level of caregiving services.

To help individuals under those circumstances, this bill would require the VA to notify veterans and caregivers of medical decisions and determinations that may affect their eligibility for the family caregiver program and to extend the caregiver benefits on a temporary basis to those who are deemed ineligible for the program, ensuring that they have time to adjust to life without the support it provides them.

It would also require VA to list the names of caregivers in veterans' electronic health records to ease communication between providers and caregivers.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to Senator GARY PETERS from Michigan and Senator MARSHA BLACKBURN, my fellow Tennessean, for introducing this bill, as well as Congressman ANDY BIGGS from Arizona for sponsoring the House companion to it. I thank each of them for their leadership on this issue and their commitment to caring for caregivers.

Mr. Speaker, I will be proudly supporting this bill today, and I urge all of my colleagues to join me.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVID P. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. BIGGS), my good friend, who is the House sponsor of this legislation.

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I thank the ranking member for all of his work here on this bill and so many others to benefit the lives of our veterans and their families. I appreciate it very much.

I strongly support S. 2216, the TEAM Veteran Caregivers Act, and, as the sponsor of H.R. 6571, the House companion of this legislation.

Family caregivers assume enormous responsibilities by caring for our wounded veterans, including many who are among our most vulnerable.

I introduced this legislation because one of my constituents, Ms. Sharon Grassi, came to us with her concerns related to the VA's family caregiver program. Sharon is the mother and caregiver of her son Derek, a 100-percent disabled veteran who served multiple tours in Iraq and Afghanistan as a combat medic. Since Derek's departure from the service, Sharon has dedicated her life to securing the well-being of her son.

Sharon told our office countless stories of her struggles attempting to gain access to her son's VA medical records, even something as simple as a much-needed copy of an MRI.

As many caregivers know, having timely access to medical records is extremely important to move forward in the recovery process of the patient. Sharon has had issues getting access to these records because the VA does not formally recognize family caregivers in the health records of the veteran.

Today, we are one step closer to fixing this issue by requiring the VA to report to Congress on the feasibility and the advisability of recognizing family caregivers in the electronic health records of the veteran.

I will continue to work with my House and Senate colleagues and the VA to ensure that no family caregiver goes through the same bureaucratic nightmares as Sharon has.

Mr. Speaker, I thank all the caregivers who support our wounded veterans every day, the Elizabeth Dole Foundation, Disabled American Veterans, Paralyzed Veterans of America, and all the veterans service organizations that voiced their strong support for this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I thank, again, my colleague from Tennessee, Dr. ROE, for his service in Congress and his strong support of our Nation's veterans. I will say I respect him. His leadership and expertise will be missed in the Halls of this Congress.

Thank you, Dr. ROE.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to vote "yes".

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVID P. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I am prepared to close.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take a couple of minutes of personal privilege before I do close.

This will be the last couple of days I am here on the House floor, and I would like to thank the constituents of the First Congressional District of Tennessee who have supported me overwhelmingly for the past 12 years. I cannot thank you enough.

I have made so many great friends as I have traveled those 12 counties in rural east Tennessee, and I couldn't be prouder of them. Certainly, my prayers are with them now during this COVID epidemic.

This was a year like no one ever expected, Mr. Speaker. I think we will all look back years from now, and history will judge us on how we did now.

I want to thank my family and friends that I have had. I would not be here without them.

During this past 12 years, I have had, obviously, some personal issues. My wife died of cancer during the 12 years I was here. I lost a very dear personal friend not 6 weeks after that. My mother died a year after that. And a year after that, I was diagnosed with cancer myself, and I am a cancer survivor.

I want to thank the people in this body and in this House for the personal support that they gave me and uplifted me, the Congressional Prayer Breakfast, and just many friends, as Mr. BIGGS talked about, that would stop and speak to you and lift you up. I don't think people see that.

I want to thank my staff. I have had an incredible staff since I have been here. I am amazed at the insight and work that these young people do on both sides of the aisle. It is just amazing. We would not get this legislation completed. You see this big, thick binder right here. It is these staff members that put this together, do the hard work, and bring us together. And I can't thank them enough.

And my colleagues: I have met and made some amazing friends that will last a lifetime here.

I remember, and I will pass this along, an old coach told me this once. We were at a Boy Scout camp and I was a counselor there. One of the scouts ran up and said: "Coach, Coach, we have a problem down at shower house number 2."

And he said: "What is it?"

The scout said: "Well, the toilet is stopped up."

And the coach, I will never forget this, he said: "We don't have problems here. We have opportunities."

So, basically, we have had a lot of opportunities, I have, since I have been here.

I have been able to serve on some committees, the Veterans' Affairs Committee, which I have been a member since day one; the Education and Labor Committee, which I had the privilege of serving as the chairman of the Subcommittee on Health, Employment, Labor, and Pensions. I served a term on the Agriculture Committee. I served on the Joint Select Committee on Solvency of Multiemployer Pension Plans. I have co-chaired the GOP Doctors Caucus for the past several terms.

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Mr. Speaker, I mean this sincerely. No one person does any of these things. It does take a team effort. And that team effort, you heard it today, you heard both sides of the aisle contribute to this piece of legislation that we just passed by voice vote.

We were able to pass in a bipartisan way the MISSION Act, which will fundamentally change—it is a very complex act that will fundamentally change how veterans get their care and improve the quality of care for our veterans.

The Forever GI Bill—Mr. Speaker, when I got out of the Army in 1975, I was able to use the GI Bill, and I know it paid me \$300 a month for 2 years. It sunsetted at 10 years. This Congress fully paid for that.

These young people now, these men and women who have served this country, can use that benefit the rest of their lives and that benefit can be transferred. It is an incredible help to

families now with the high cost of education.

We had an SGR, the sustainable growth rate repeal, and Medicare reform, the Medicare wage index reform.

We passed the National Desert Storm and Desert Shield War Memorial Act.

With Whip HOYER, we passed an EpiPen bill so that they can be put in schools around the country. And I can tell you, after that happened, in my own district about 3 years ago, a student had an anaphylactic reaction. She did not know she had a problem. And a life was saved because of that.

I think if I did anything in Congress—and I want to thank Mr. HOYER for his help with that. We have another asthma bill that is getting hot lined in the Senate, to show you can do bipartisan work across the aisle.

That is just a few of the things that we were able to succeed and do. These are, again, not done by any one person. They are done as a team. And I want to thank everyone who helped make my time here in Congress successful.

I can tell you, it is one of the great privileges of my life to serve in the House of Representatives, in the greatest deliberative body in the world, the United States Congress. It is an honor I will never forget, Mr. Speaker.

I will finish by saying that I encourage my colleagues to support this bill and, graciously, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would just like to take a few moments to say even more words of praise for my colleague, Dr. PHIL ROE, my ranking member. We have served on two committees coterminously: the Veterans' Affairs Committee, which you chaired and which I now chair and which we have been both ranking members; and the Education and Labor Committee.

It is sort of a fate of coincidence, but it has been an absolute pleasure to be your colleague, sir. I wish you well in this next chapter of your life.

I especially want to take note of the example you set by organizing the congressional delegation trip to Afghanistan. I believe it was either my first term or my second term in Congress. What an honor that was to travel with you and a bipartisan delegation to serve turkey dinner during Thanksgiving. I never forgot that lesson.

I vowed that if I ever became chairman of the committee, that we would do the same thing, we would continue that tradition of serving our troops who cannot be with their families during the holiday season.

That spirit of service carried into the work that you have done and I have done together, with all the Members. We say it is a team effort. It is a special part of the Congress that we have staff that interact with each other, not primarily in an antagonistic mode. There are differences, but we work them out and we work them out bi-camerally.

I note that Mr. Towers is going to go work on the other side, and I say that with all great affection. Some things will change, some things will stay constant.

This behemoth, it is more than 300 pages of legislative text. That is a testament to the spirit of wanting to do right.

I want to congratulate my own staff director, Ray Kelley, for that amazing work of both he and Jon and their counterparts in the Senate. This could not be the work of PHIL ROE and myself alone. It was the work of incredible leadership at the staff level.

I could go on and name every staff person. I have 28–29 staffers, and they all have performed magnificently to produce, I think, this incredible holiday gift to America's veterans and to America.

So PHIL ROE, thank you for, together, this gift that our teams have created for our country. Thank you for the gift you have been to our country.

And my final word to you is, on your next chapter, Godspeed.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 2216.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3 of House Resolution 965, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

CRISIS STABILIZATION AND COMMUNITY REENTRY ACT OF 2020

Ms. BASS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 3312) to establish a crisis stabilization and community reentry grant program, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 3312

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Crisis Stabilization and Community Reentry Act of 2020".

SEC. 2. MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS STABILIZATION.

(a) PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS.—Title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (34 U.S.C. 10101 et seq.) is amended by inserting after part NN the following:

"PART OO—CRISIS STABILIZATION AND COMMUNITY REENTRY PROGRAM.

"SEC. 3051. GRANT AUTHORIZATION.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General may make grants under this part to States, for use by State and local correctional facilities, for the purpose of providing clinical